

Off To See The Yellow Submarine By Peter Mayer

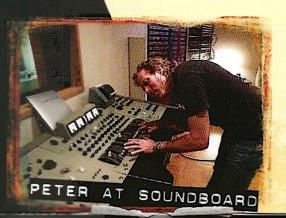
"Apparently you get PJ's on that British Airways flight, that's the real deal," I hung up the phone with my friend Mike, confident that I was in for a unique transatlantic experience. Peter's confidence was shaken, however, as he and fellow Reefers suffered the indignities of commercial airline travel.

We arrived at Heathrow, still intact, and feeling great after two hours of sleep. This was my second trip to London in a year's time, but a first for the Coral Reefers as a band. I was excited because I had arranged to stay two extra days in England with my friend Mike and Brother Jim so we could visit Liverpool. Some of you may have seen the Abbey Road footage I posted online last year, but this year we were making a pilgrimage to the home town of the Fab Four.

In London, we stayed in Shepherd's Bush, a great area with anything and everything you could want from restaurants, theatres, clubs, studios, malls etc. What a fabulous city! I never understood a comment made to me by a friend who shall remain unnamed, "Why would you ever want to go to London?" From the Roman Empire to the Fab Four, there is an unending trail of history, music, art and food to follow. Our mission, should we decide to accept it, was to play a concert with Jimmy at the Empire Theatre, and in the three days before that, do some recording at Mark Knopfler's place, British Grove Studios. These tracks would be added to the ten or so tracks that had already been completed in the States for Jimmy's new CD.

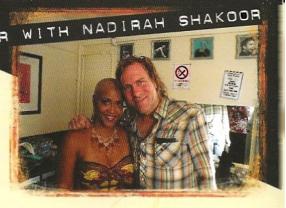
After a "clear the jetlag and sight-seeing day," we took a taxi over to British Grove Studios, about a 10 minute drive. It's nestled in the back of a neighborhood on an alley wide street, and you'd never find it if you weren't looking for it. In fact, we didn't find it, until we called for directions. JL Jamison, the Vasco De Gama of the crew, walked out the door with a John Wayne swagger and said, "You boys aren't from around here are you?"

British Grove is one of the most beautiful, well-organized studios I've ever been in. It's not only the care with which everything



is organized, nor the fine wood and comfortable furnishings throughout; not even the history around you that includes the mixing board that Paul McCartney used for "Band On The Run". It's the sum of all those parts, and that intangible "Mojo Factor" that makes it easy to make music there.

The vibe is right and it sounds incredible. Alan Schulman, our good friend, who engineered Jimmy's last three or four albums, and a bevy of #1 songs, said he was astounded at how well maintained everything was. It's one thing to have great microphones and state-of- the-



art equipment; it's another to have everything kept in pristine, perfect working order.

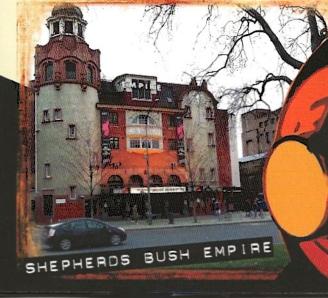
Among the amazing historical bits and pieces of gear they had there was a 4 track Redd recorder like the one used on the Beatles' Sergeant Pepper's Album. It had been cleaned up and maintained to original standards, and in fact, Brother Jim's bass was put through it for tone on several Jimmy songs. It is the recorder that was used for the photo in the Beatles Gear book, since the original recorder is no longer available. They believe it was discarded when Abbey Road was updated and cleaned out. (Go figure, someone made a to-do list that day that read: light bulbs for closet, empty trash cans, pay gas bill and chuck mixing board that made some of history's greatest rock n' roll music). Behind a glass display case sat a beat up old Radio Shack looking speaker about 12 inches tall and 9 inches wide. Apparently it was designed and built, as a joke, out of some spare parts by Geoff Emerick, the Beatles' engineer, when George Martin and the Beatles asked for a speaker to monitor the mixes they had in mono. (All Beatles' music up to then had been mixed in mono (one speaker) and stereo had been an afterthought that was done quickly to accommodate the new stereo home sound systems). The best part of the joke was that they actually used it for the whole album.

Show day came on Sunday after three days in the studio. We had sound check mid-day and arrived at the O2 Empire Theatre at about 1 p.m. The Empire is a performing hall with a rich history. Built in 1903, its first shows were vaudeville-like reviews that included the likes of Charlie Chaplin. In the 50's, the BBC used it for television programming and in the 60's for music acts such as Cliff Richard, Lulu, and Shirley Bassey among others. Since the early 90's though, it's been used exclusively as a music venue. The Empire has a capacity of only 2,000, but the intimate experience it provides concertgoers has attracted artists like Neil Finn, David Bowie, Phish, Elton John, The Rolling Stones, Radio Head, and yes, Jimmy Buffett. It's also the site where the Dixie Chicks' Natalie Maines dissed George W. a few years back causing such uproar that it had country music fans burning their CD's.

We were surprised by the lines of people outside the theatre. While that's not so unusual here in the states, the crowds we've encountered in Paris have been enthusiastic but appeared to be more the expats than were tried and true Parrot Heads along with some new French fans. In London, we were seeing huge Jimmy fans that knew the drill, were ready to rock, and wondered where the heck we'd been for all these years. Christiane Amanpur, the NPR and CNN foreign correspondent, gave a surprise appearance as a Parrot Head that night as did Frank Marshall, Coral Reefer friend and film producer. A few moments in the dressing room and it was time to hit the stage. Jimmy gave the packed house a full show and several encores that night. Anybody who's asked themselves, "why go to a show in London when I can go down the street and", could understand why, only if they were there to experience the electricity in the room as fans that have never seen a live Jimmy Buffett show came together at a distant outpost on that Sunday night. As the last strains of Werewolves of London, Yellow Submarine and He Went to Paris faded away; we raced out of the theatre into the vans and headed back to the hotel for the after party. It was time to get some sleep. Tomorrow we'd head out on our own journey to an outpost called Liverpool.

I dropped my guitar in the boot of the London taxi and we all headed for Euston station the next morning. We were still a little bleary eyed from the previous night at the Empire and the after party, but I would have stayed up all night long for the journey ahead of us. It was my Brother Jim, my good friend Mike Davis from Atlanta GA, and me on a mission to visit the stomping grounds of a group of teens, way back when, who had set the direction for my life many years ago.

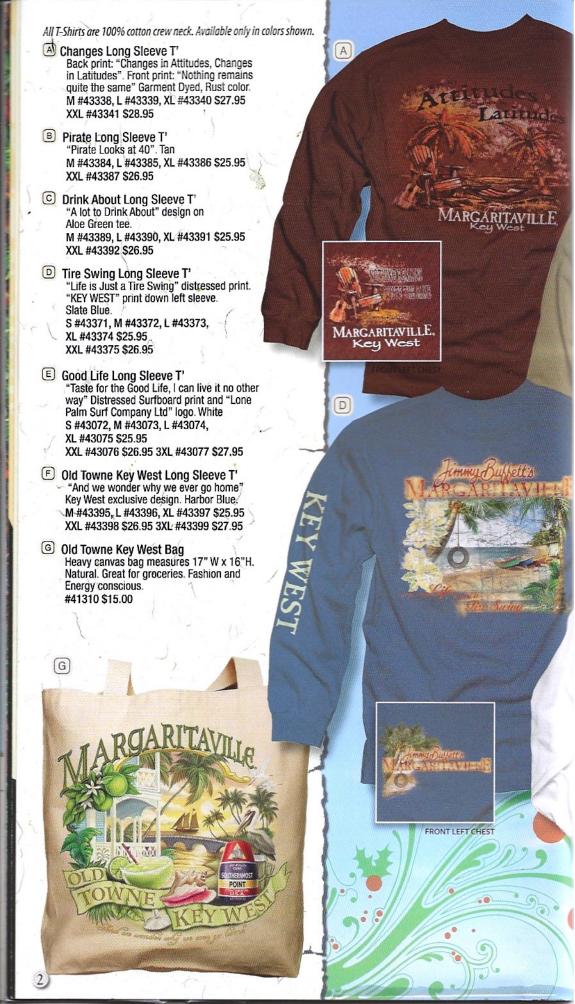
Read Peter's complete story and see more photos at www.margaritavillekeywest.com/petermayer Peter's latest CD Beyond Abbey Road will be released November 4th in Key West.

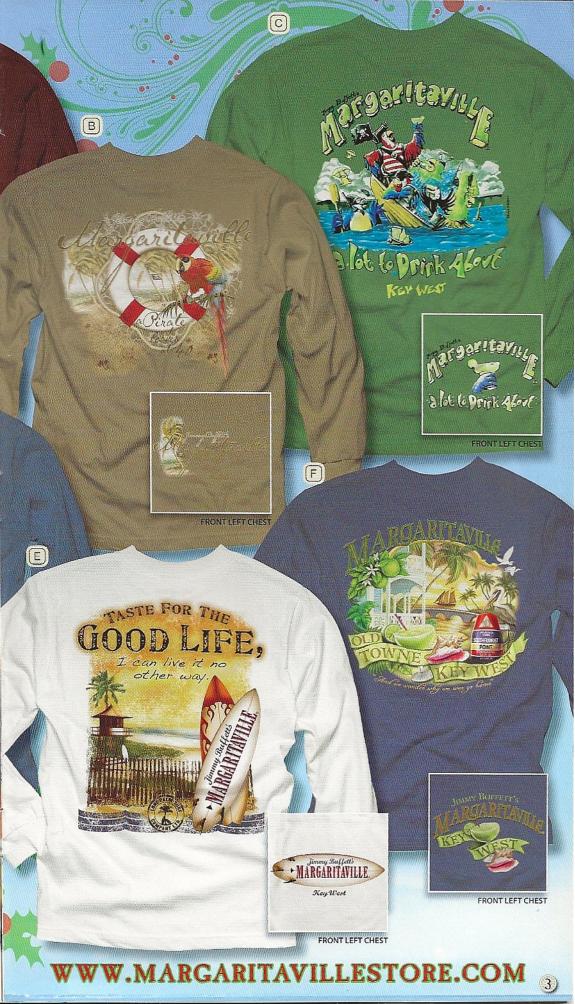


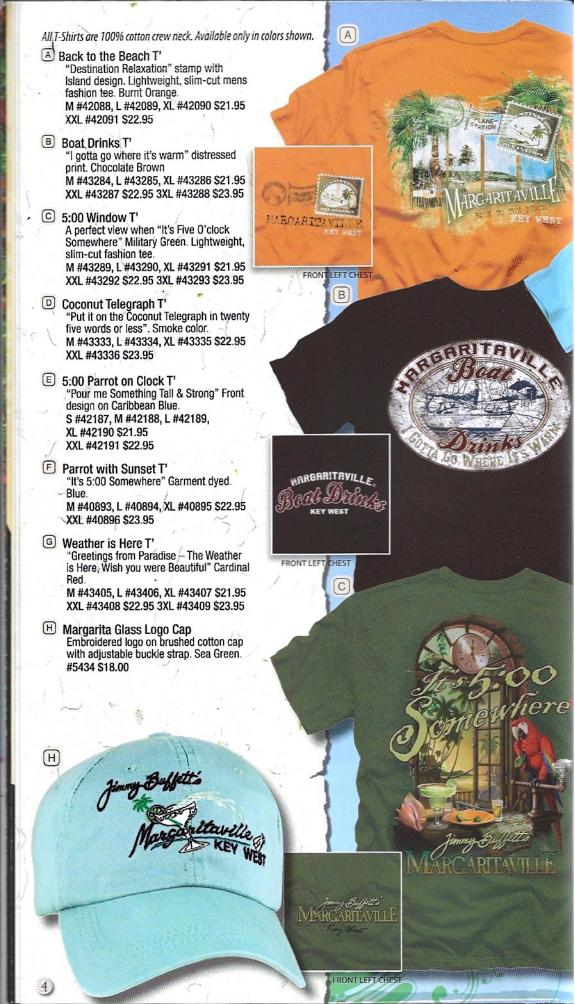


A Margaritaville Est. 1985 Full Zip Jacket.
Large screen print design. 80/20 sweatshirt with soft fleece inside. Jersey lined hood with drawstring, front pouch pockets. Spandex rib at cuff and waistband. Charcoal Grey.

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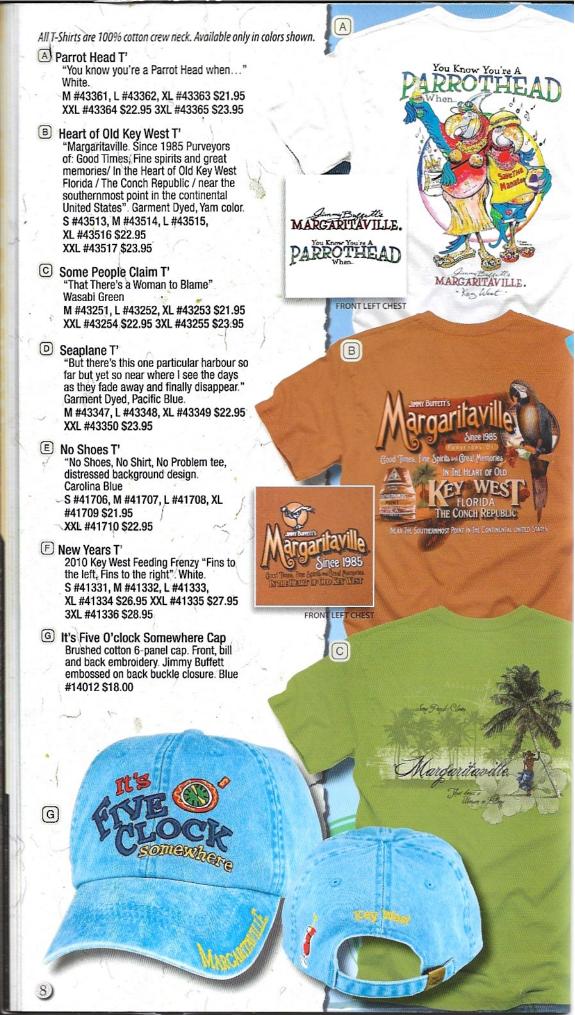




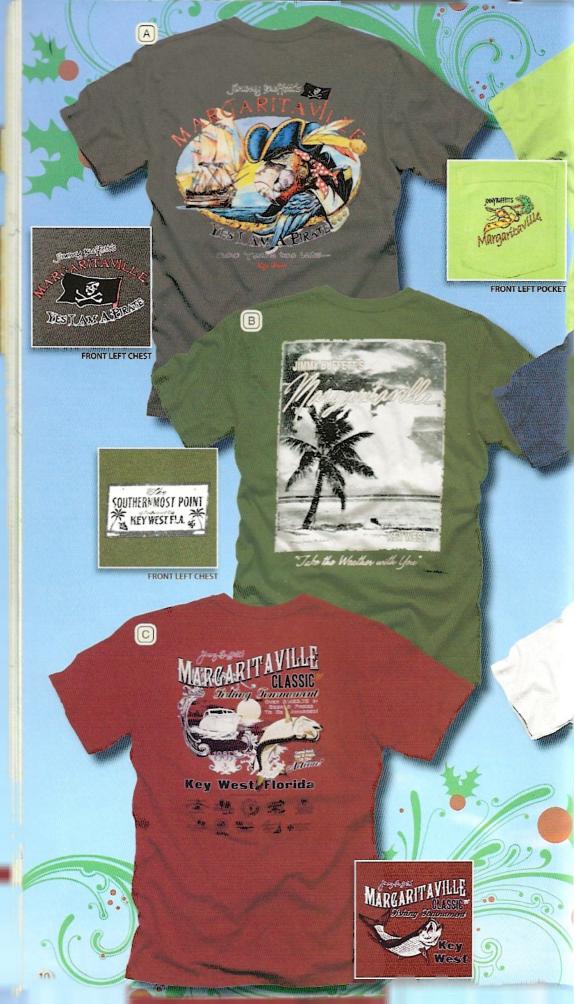








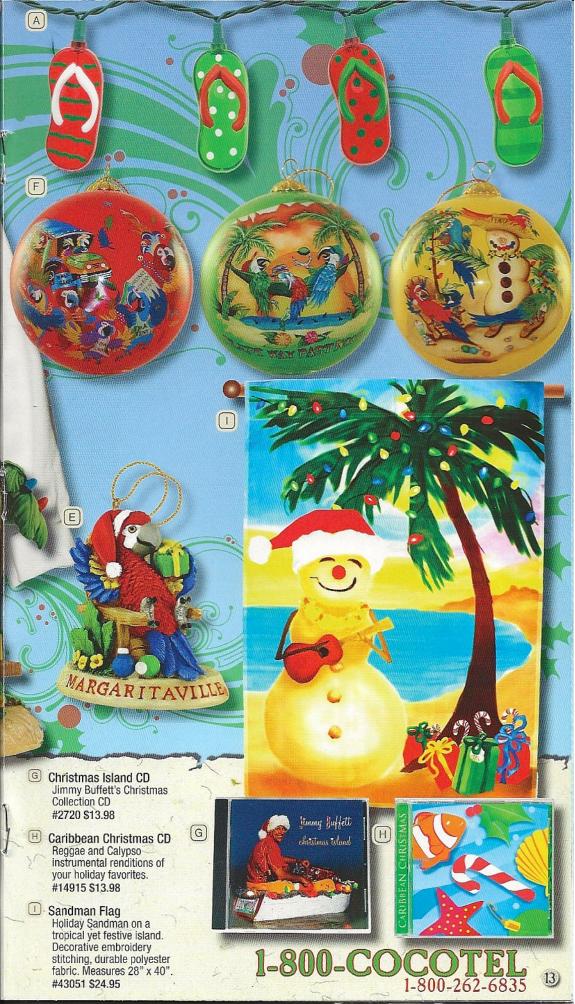








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Custom Margaritaville Bucket "Just another day in paradise printed along top and Margaritaville lower down on the bottom.
On the various "photos", lyrics are printed to correspond. Design repeats on other side. Metal bucket measures approx. 7"H x 9"diameter. #42230 \$15.00

B 2010 Jimmy Buffett Calendar Photos and recollections by longtime Buffett photographer Tom Corcoran. #2242 \$12.95

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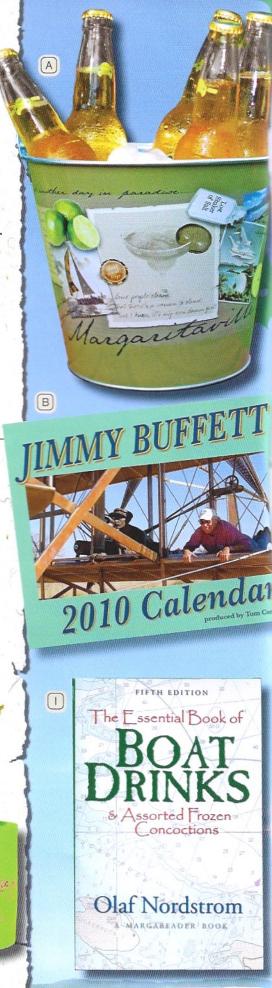
Logo Margarita Glass Margaritaville Logo Margarita Glass with Key West location print. Holds 16 oz. #42231 \$10.00 each

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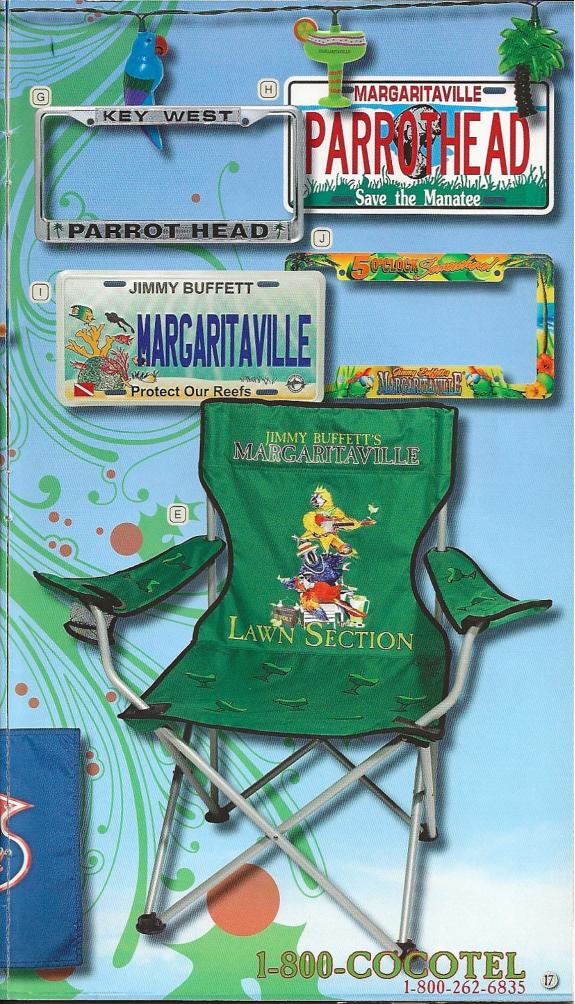
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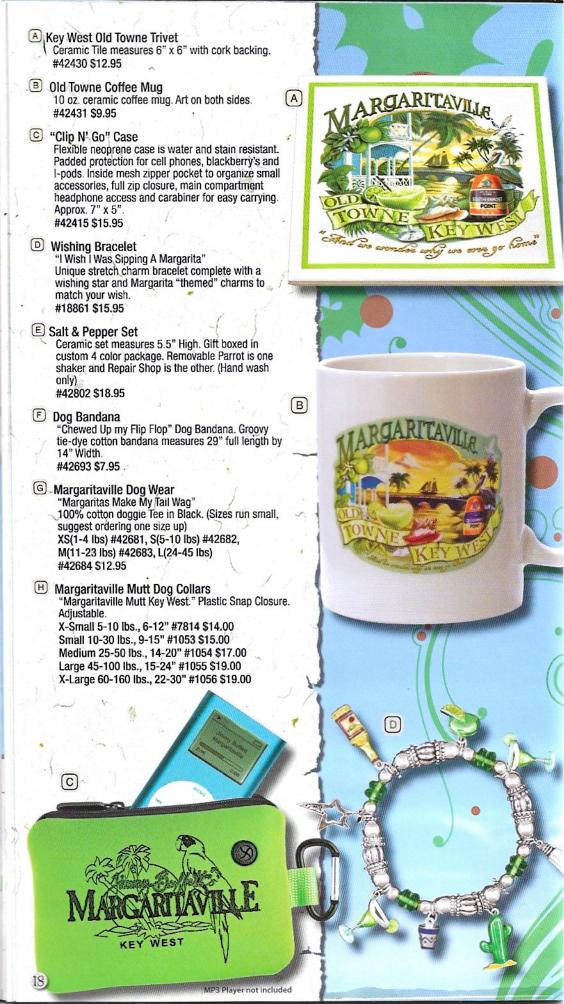
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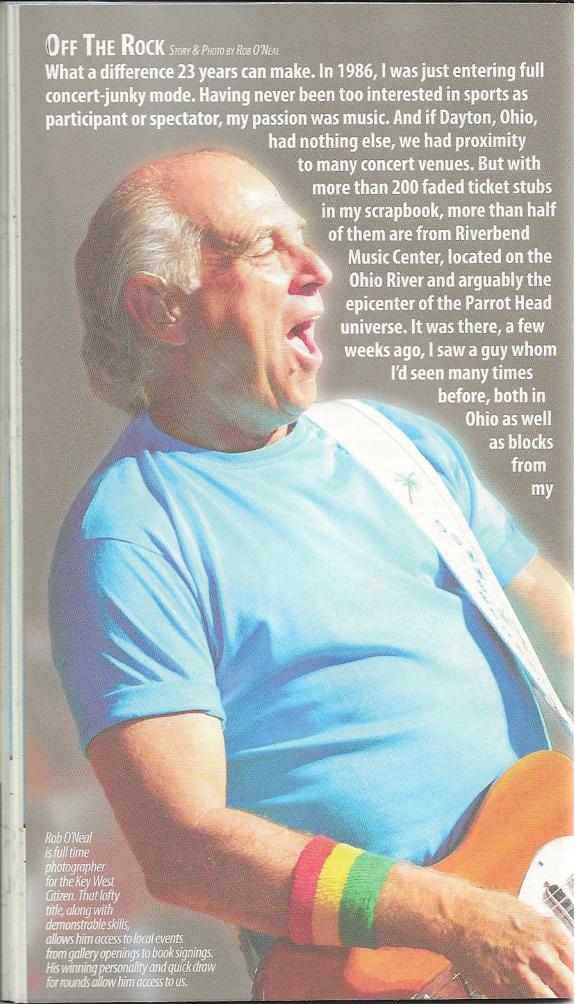
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place in Key West. But the first chance I had to see Jimmy Buffett was at, of all places, an amusement park, Kings Island to be exact. I remember lots and lots of empty seats that night, but a hell of a good time. I was hooked.

This past August 6th, though, things would be different. Organizers told me the Parrot Heads began showing up at sunrise for the nearinstantly sold-out show. Encampments filled with surf boards, coconuts, balloons, barbeques, blasting music, adult beverages, grass skirted men and female Parrot Heads who apparently thought it was a Girls Gone Wild shoot lined Kellogg Avenue. But with a backstage pass, fourth row tickets and a photo pass in hand, my brother and I had a better option; a behind the scenes look at this wildly popular traveling show. A friend of mine, J.L. Jamison, had arranged this glimpse of life on the road and it was an unforgettable experience. An entourage of 100 arrives in each city via plush tour buses, a seemingly endless food line is housed in a massive air-conditioned tent, buses line the backstage parking lot and wires are everywhere. Behind the band that night was a 60-foot jumbotron on which images of Jimmy through the years, as well as a handful of my Key West images would be shown. That alone was enough to give a guy

goose bumps. This was a special evening. While standing onstage just prior to show time, I looked out over the crowd that topped 20,000. It was hard to believe how many times I

had been 'out there.' Before it all began, I turned to fellow photographer Joseph Fuqua II, from

the Cincinnati Enquirer, from our position at stage left and said I had expected to be closer to Jimmy. 'What?' he asked. Fact is, after shooting arms length from Jimmy at Margaritaville or at Shrimpboat Sound, you get a little spoiled. Once the Coral Reefers took the stage, the place went nuts. Then, dressed in a T-shirt and shorts, and not a flip-flop in sight, Jimmy strolled onto the stage and kept the crowd on their feet for the next two-plus hours, a far cry indeed from that half-filled amphitheater in 1986.







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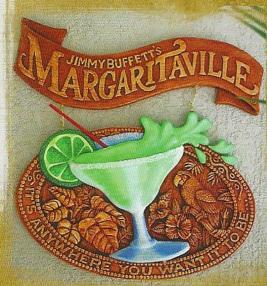
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over \$5 million in grants to organizations serving the environment, children, families and marginalized individuals. #4400-\$3.00